Debating

a. Women are cleaner than men. vs. Men have better personal hygiene habits.
b. Men are more intelligent than women. vs. Women are the ones with the brains.
c. Women are funnier than men. vs. Men are much better at telling jokes.
d. Men are more honest than women. vs. Women are more honest than men.
e. Women are better dressed than men. vs. Men have the better sense of style.
f. Men are more interesting than women. vs. Women are more interesting.
g. Women are more sensible than men. vs. Men have the common sense.
h. Men are kinder than women. vs. Women are a hundred times kinder than men.

TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article’s headline and guess whether these sentences are true

a. Women are obsessed when it comes to washing their hands. T / F
b. A study looked at hygiene habits in American lavatories. T / F
c. Only 35 percent of American men wash their hands in public toilets. T / F
d. In telephone interviews, people exaggerated how hygienic they are. T / F
e. A doctor recommended buying effective tools to prevent infections. T / F
f. The single most important way of staying healthy is to get a flu jab. T / F
g. Most colds are spread via airborne transmission from sneezing. T / F
h. Banknotes and coins are contaminated with illness-causing bacteria. T / F

Women wash hands more often than men

Women clean up and beat men hands down when it comes to washing their hands after using a public lavatory. A new observational study from the U.S. reveals that women are more conscientious in practicing hygiene habits than men in public toilets. The American Society for Microbiology (ASM) monitored the washroom habits of thousands of people in restrooms in four major U.S. cities. It found 90 percent of women washed their hands, compared with 75 percent of men. A parallel telephone survey revealed that men and women perhaps exaggerate how hygienic they are, with 97 percent of women and 96 percent of men saying they always or usually wash their hands after using a public restroom.

Dr. Judy Daly of the ASM advised: “One of the most effective tools in preventing the spread of infection is literally at our fingertips. The single most important thing we can do to keep from getting sick and spreading illness to others is to clean our hands. Flu viruses are readily transferred from unclean hands.” She explained that contrary to what many people believe, cold and flu viruses are spread by hands more often than through airborne transmission from sneezing. However, the study found only 42 percent wash after petting a dog or cat, 32 percent after coughing or sneezing and 21 percent after handling money. Unbeknown to most, 75 percent to 95 percent of banknotes and coins are contaminated with illness-causing bacteria.

SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

a. clean up  
   infected
b. hands down  
   truly
c. conscientious  
   overstate
d. parallel  
   easily
e. exaggerate  
   opposite
f. literally  
   diligent
g. contrary  
   oblivious
h. transmission  
   win
i. unbeknown  
   passing on
j. contaminated  
   corresponding
PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

a. beat men hands
b. when it comes
c. women are more conscientious in
d. a parallel
e. men and women perhaps
f. effective tools in preventing
g. contrary to
h. airborne
i. Unbeknown
j. contaminated

Choose the correct word

Women clean up and beat men hands up / down when it goes / comes to washing their hands after using a public lavatory. A new observational study from the U.S. reveals that women are more conscientious / consecutive in practicing hygiene habits than men in public toilets. The American Society for Microbiology (ASM) monitored the washroom habits / habitats of thousands of people in restrooms in four major U.S. cities. It found 90 percent of women washed their hands, compared with 75 percent of men. A parallel / paranoid telephone survey revealed that men and women perhaps exonerate / exaggerate how hygienic they are, with 97 percent of women and 96 percent of men saying they always or usually wash their hands after using a public restroom.

Dr. Judy Daly of the ASM advised: “One of the most effective tools in preventing the spread of infection is literally / figuratively at our fingertips. The single / double most important thing we can do to keep from getting sick and spreading illness to others is to clean our hands. Flu viruses are readily / ready-made transferred from unclean hands.” She explained that contrary / controversial to what many people believe, cold and flu viruses are spread by hands more often than through airy-fairy / airborne transmission from sneezing. However, the study found only 42 percent wash after petting a dog or cat, 32 percent after coughing or sneezing and 21 percent after handling money. Unbeknown / Unbecoming to most, 75 percent to 95 percent of banknotes and coins are contaminated with illness-causing bacteria.

Look at the words below. Try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- beat
- conscientious
- habits
- parallel
- exaggerate
- always
- effective
- single
- ready
- transmission
- petting
- contaminated

a. Are you very conscientious when it comes to personal hygiene?
b. Do you wash your hands without fail every time you go to the toilet?
c. What do you think of public toilets?
d. Do you have a special routine every time you use a public toilet?
e. What is the worst public toilet you have ever used?
f. How do the public toilets in your country compare with those in other countries?
g. Why do you think women are more hygienic than men?
h. Do you think people in your country are very hygienic?
i. Do you think people from your country wash their hands more or less often than Americans?
j. How often do you wash your hands after sneezing or petting animals?
k. Will you wash your hands more often after this lesson?